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## Business Travelers' Tips on Flying Laptop Free

By Mona Bushnell, B2B Tech Writer June 16, 2017 06:58 am EST

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The recent ban on laptops on certain flights has business travelers concerned about what could happen if these temporary security measures become permanent and wide reaching. How would the modern business traveler adapt to air travel without the modern convenience of a work laptop? We reached out to dozens of jet setting entrepreneurs, some of whom have already been affected by laptop bans, to get their take on the issue.

### Electronics baggage handling charges

Chris Christensen, the entrepreneur behind BloggerBridge and

AmateurTraveler, has already encountered the laptop ban in his travels. In his opinion, the biggest problem isn't what he can do on a flight without his laptop, but how baggage handlers will deal with checking expensive laptops, tablets and SLR cameras.

"Turkish Air was handling this as best they could. You personally checked in each device. They inspected it and placed each individually in a Bubble Wrap bag. These bags then went into a special suitcase or two, which they hand-carried to the plane." While this process was time-consuming and inconvenient, at least everything reached [its] destination in working order.



Credit: Shutterstock

Full-time digital nomad Kelly Hayes-Raitt has been living on the road for the past eight years and shares some of Christensen's concerns. After all, her laptop is her livelihood. She predicts airlines will try to capitalize on the in-flight ban on laptops and use it as an opportunity to make money. She said, "I can imagine airlines reacting by creating a more expensive 'TLC' baggage fee for banned electronics, further nickle-and-diming their customers."

## **More late night travel**

Some business travelers who feel they can't be productive without their laptops say they'll resort to booking late night flights to compensate for lost work hours. Jason Parks, who owns a Columbus, Ohio, digital ad agency called The Media Captain, is one such business traveler. He said, "I honestly have anxiety about this [...] I think business travelers would adapt by taking flights later in the evening. I know this is the route that I'd take. I couldn't afford to be completely unplugged each time I travel during business hours. Traveling at night would at least give me peace of mind that I'm not missing out on important information."

## **Airline rental laptops**

Bruce Clark, an associate professor of marketing at Northeastern University, believes renting disposable laptops could be the answer to an across-the-board laptop ban. He pointed out that executives don't want to check their laptops, due to potential damage and data sensitivity.

He explained, "Airlines or other companies could provide 'disposable' laptops that rely on cloud storage. People would not carry their own laptop, but rather [would] buy or rent a 'shell' laptop on which users could upload data before the flight and/or download data after the flight. As long as there is no data resident on the laptop, it doesn't matter if the laptop is damaged or stolen."

The founder of CutCableToday, Chris Brantner, agrees with Clark's concept of airlines renting laptops: "I think that if there's ever a full ban on laptops, airlines will start renting out notebooks on flights. Some airlines already do it with tablets for entertainment purposes. So ideally, you'd be able to carry a flash drive with you or keep everything stored in the cloud, rent a laptop in-flight and get to work."

## **Work friendly phones and docks**

Without the option to work on their laptops, many business travelers will likely turn to their phones for basic tasks. If laptop-free flying becomes the norm, it's possible that phone manufacturers will respond with a wider range of work friendly phones specifically for travel.

Jonathan Rodriguez, the founder, president and CEO of BitMar Networks, thinks phones are the ultimate answer to any (and all) laptop bans. He recommends frequent business travelers ask their employers to provide them with phones that are both powerful and intended for business use.

In Rodriguez's opinion, "The best business friendly smartphone is the Windows Phone [...] especially the 950XL. It is literally a hand-held computer which even acts as one, when you connect it to Continuum." The same could be said of the Samsung Galaxy 8 and 8+, which can be turned into desktops via the DeX Station. If Rodriguez's estimation is correct, more phone companies may well release business-centric phones that attach to compatible desktop or laptop docks.

## **Relaxation and socializing**

Surprisingly, some jet-setting entrepreneurs aren't at all concerned about the possibility of future laptop bans on flights. Mary Kaarto, an author and motivational speaker, said, "I would sleep, read or actually engage with anyone

next to me. What a concept."

Eva Doyle, the speaker and consultant behind The Reluctant Leader, shares Kaarto's general point of view. She said she would spend her long business travel hours relaxing, reading and doing occasional work on her phone or tablet. Doyle thinks it's possible that cheap and sturdy travel laptops (built to survive rough baggage handling) may become popular but also pointed out that in-flight working has never been ideal, "The expectation has been that people will do work on flights, but let's face it, even in business class, working on your computer is a bit of a pain. In coach, it's absolutely miserable. Many business travelers will be relieved that they are unable to work on flights, even if they don't admit it."

No one knows for sure what the future of business travel will be like, but one thing is clear: There's no possible ban that can quell the innovation and persistence of traveling entrepreneurs.

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Mona Bushnell is a New York City-based Staff Writer for Tom's IT Pro and Business News Daily. She has a B.A. in Writing, Literature, and Publishing from Emerson College and has previously worked as an IT Technician, a Copywriter, a Software Administrator, a Scheduling Manager and an Editorial Writer. Mona began freelance writing full-time in 2014 and joined the Purch team in 2017.



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